

Message Text

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FOL CAIRO 12837 SENT ACTION SECSTATE MAY 15, 1978 REPEATED
TO YOU QUOTE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE CAIRO 12837

ATTENTION DEPUTY SECRETARY CHRISTOPHER AND ASSISTANT
SECRETARY SAUNDERS

REF: STATE 122780

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MARR EG SA US IS
SUBJECT: SADAT REMARKS TO CHICAGO TRIBUNE ON ARMS SALES

1. FOLLOWING ARE THE EXCERPTS CONCERNING ARMS SALES WHICH
PRESIDENT SADAT MADE IN HIS INTERVIEW WITH THE CHICAGO
TRIBUNE ON SATURDAY, MAY 13.

Q. ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT WHAT THE RUSSIANS ARE DOING IN
AFRICA?

A. WELL, GO AND ASK YOUR PEOPLE IN THE FOREIGN RELATIONS
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COMMITTEE EITHER IN THE SENATE OR IN THE CONGRESS. I
TOLD THEM. LAST YEAR--APRIL LAST YEAR, MORE THAN A YEAR
NOW, APRIL 1977, AND THEY DIDN'T BELIEVE ME. AT THAT
TIME THERE WERE THE ANGOLA AND ZAIRE PROBLEMS. I TOLD
THEM WE SHALL BE HAVING THE HORN SOON. THEY DID NOT
BELIEVE ME. SIX MONTHS AFTER THAT CAME THE HORN. THIS
TIME I AM TELLING YOU ERITREA WILL BE, ERITREA AND
SUDAN, BECAUSE THE SOVIET UNION IS AFTER NUMAYRI IN SUDAN
AND AFTER ME. HE WILL NEVER FORGET WHAT NUMAYRI HAS CALLED
HIM, OR HIS ATTITUDE, AND THEY NEVER WILL FORGIVE ME BE-

CAUSE OF WHAT THEY CONSIDER I HAVE DONE TO THEM. SO I SAID THAT LAST APRIL 1977; TODAY AND I AM TELLING YOU AS I HAVE TOLD YOUR PEOPLE IN THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEES IN THE SENATE AND CONGRESS. UNFORTUNATELY YOU ARE STILL PUTTING AN EMBARGO ON ME JUST LIKE THE SOVIET UNION PUT AN EMBARGO ON ME FOR FIVE YEARS, SINCE THE END OF THE OCTOBER WAR UNTIL THIS MOMENT. I AM NOT ASKING FOR OFFENSIVE ARMS. THE PLANE, THE F-5E, THAT I AM ASKING FOR IS A TENTH-RATE AIRPLANE COMPARED WITH WHAT ISRAELIS ARE RECEIVING, EITHER THE PHANTOMS OR F-15S OR F-16S. THIS IS A TENTH GRADE BEHIND THEM. WELL, ALL I AM ASKING IS THIS, IF THE UNITED STATES IS GOING TO TREAT ME LIKE THE SOVIETS ARE TREATING ME, REALLY, IT WILL BE A VERY GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT IN THIS FIELD OF DEFENSE BECAUSE ALL I AM ASKING IS FOR OUR LEGITIMATE DEFENSE. I AM NOT ASKING THESE ARMS TO START AN OFFENSIVE AGAINST ISRAEL. I AM ONLY ASKING THIS FOR OUR LEGITIMATE DEFENSE. MY RESPONSIBILITY.

Q. IF THAT PACKAGE FAILS IN THE CONGRESS, AND IT IS UNCERTAIN RIGHT NOW, WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECT ON MIDDLE EAST PEACE AND THE WHOLE PEACE PROCESS IN YOUR ESTIMATION?

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A. LET ME TELL YOU QUITE FRANKLY. IT WILL BE A GREAT DISASTER. WHAT WE ARE ASKING, SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT, WE ARE ASKING FOR THE LEGITIMATE DEFENSE OF OUR PEOPLE, OUR NATION. WE ARE NOT ASKING TO START ANY OFFENSIVE AGAINST ANYONE. FOR ME, MYSELF, I HAVE ALREADY MENTIONED THIS BATTLE IN AFRICA. I CALL IT THE BATTLE IN AFRICA BECAUSE IT STARTED IN THE WESTERN AFRICA WITH ANGOLA AND ZAIRE, NOW IT IS IN EASTERN AFRICA, IN THE HORN. TOMORROW (IT) WILL BE IN THE SUDAN AND ON MY DOORS. SO ALREADY THERE IS A FEELING OF UNCERTAINTY AMONG ALL THE ARAB WORLD TOWARDS THE UNITED STATES. WHY? BECAUSE AFTER ISRAEL MADE ITS ATTACK ON THE SOUTH OF LEBANON, AND AFTER PRESIDENT CARTER USED ALL HIS EFFORTS TO MAKE ISRAEL WITHDRAW, THEY ARE STILL SLACKING. BELIEVE ME, THERE IS A VERY GRAVE STATE OF UNCERTAINTY AMONG THE WHOLE ARAB WORLD.

Q. MR. PRESIDENT, WOULD YOU BE JUST AS DETERMINED TO CONTINUE WITH YOUR PEACE OFFENSIVE IF THAT PACKAGE FAILS IN CONGRESS? DOES IT HAVE ANY EFFECT ON YOU?

A. NOT AT ALL. IT WILL NEVER AFFECT MY EFFORTS TO REACH PEACE OR TO ESTABLISH IT. IT WILL NEVER. BUT LET ME PUT SOME REMARKS ON THIS--I WROTE IT SO THAT I WOULDN'T FORGET IT. AS I TOLD YOU, WE HAVE ALREADY SHOWN OUR BEHAVIOR BEFORE THE HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS ALL OVER THE WORLD THAT THE OCTOBER WAR WILL BE THE LAST WAR. BUT

LIKE SAUDI ARABIA AND ISRAEL, EGYPT MUST SATISFY ITS
LEGITIMATE DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS. THIS F-5E WILL BE AN
AND SENATE, OF THE UNDERSTANDING THIS ISSUE OF SECURITY
NEEDS. WE HAVE FOLLOWED WITH GREAT INTEREST THE DEBATE
IN THE CONGRESS AND WE ARE STILL FOLLOWING IT. LET ME
TELL YOU
THIS, I HOPE THAT THE CONGRESS WILL RECOGNIZE, AS THE
ADMINISTRATION HAS, THE VALIDITY OF EGYPT'S NEEDS. EGYPT
AND SAUDI ARABIA I THINK HAVE SHOWN THEIR CONFIDENCE IN
THE UNITED STATES, AND WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER HAND-IN-
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HAND IN TRYING TO FIND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION THROUGH WHICH
PERMANENT PEACE WILL BE ESTABLISHED IN THE AREA. WELL,
AS I TOLD YOU OF THIS CASE OF UNCERTAINTY, IF THIS DEAL
WILL BE REFUSED BY THE SENATE AND THE CONGRESS IT SHALL
MEAN THAT YOU DO NOT RECIPROCATATE US THE TRUST WE HAVE IN
YOU AND THIS WILL BE VERY FATAL. BUT STILL, AS I TOLD
YOU, IT WILL NOT HINDER ME FROM DOING MY BEST TO REACH A
PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT.

Q: MR. PRESIDENT, YOU JUST SAID THAT IF WE DO NOT
RECIPROCATATE THE TRUST THE ARABS HAVE PLACED IN THE UNITED
STATES, IT WILL BE VERY FATAL. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?
THOSE ARE PRETTY STRONG WORDS.

A: LET ME TELL YOU THIS QUITE FRANKLY. I TOLD YOU ABOUT
THE CASE OF UNCERTAINTY ALL OVER THE ARAB WORLD AFTER
ISRAEL INVADDED SOUTHERN LEBANAON. WHY? WHY UNCERTAINTY?
IT IS THIS. ISRAEL IS DOING WHATEVER SHE WANTS, AND IN
SPITE OF THE FACT THAT PRESIDENT CARTER PUTS AN
URGENT PROPOSAL TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL, AND THE SECURITY
COUNCIL DECIDES ON THIS IN 24 HOURS TO WITHDRAW AND SO
ISRAEL IS SLACKING AND FULFILLING ITS (OWN) WISHES. THIS
MEAN THAT THE UNITED STATES WE KNOW WHO SHOULD BE, I MEAN,
THE SAFETY VALVE FOR WHAT ISRAEL DOES HERE, IT SHOWS
THAT THE UNITED STATES LOST ITS INFLUENCE AND THIS IS THE
CAUSE OF UNCERTAINTY. IN THE CASE WHEN I TELL YOU THAT,
FOR SAUDI ARABIA AND FOR ME, IT WILL BE VERY FATAL,
WE SHALL NOT BE IN A POSITION TO TRY AND CONVINCE ANY
ARAB MAN ON THE STREET THAT THE UNITED STATES AND PRESIDENT
CARTER CAN'T STOP ISRAEL BECAUSE, AS YOU KNOW, THE VEIN
OF LIFE GOES FROM THE UNITED STATES TO ISRAEL. LET ME
COMPLETE MY LAST STATEMENT ON THIS ARMS DEAL. I THINK I
HAVE BEEN CLEAR BEFORE THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEES
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BOTH IN THE SENATE AND CONGRESS AND I STATED QUITE

CLEARLY. I AM STATING IT AGAIN. WE ARE NOT ASKING AS I TOLD YOU FOR ARMS TO ATTACK ISRAEL BUT FOR OUR LEGITIMATE DEFENSE ISSUE, ESPECIALLY ME IN AFRICA HERE WITH THE PERILS THAT I TOLD YOU ABOUT. BUT I HAVE STATED BEFORE YOUR CONGRESS AND THE SENATE THAT IN THE PEACE AGREEMENT I SHALL BE READY TO AGREE UPON THE LIMITATION AND ENDING THE RACE OF ARMAMENTS IN THE AREA.

Q: ARE YOU BOTHERED BY MR. CARTER'S INITIAL CONCESSION IN HIS EFFORTS TO GET THE DEAL PASSED -- THE 20 ADDITIONAL PLANES FOR ISRAEL AND WHAT THE LOCATION IS -- THE GUARANTEE OF WHERE THE SAUDIS WILL PLACE THE PLANES? DOES THAT CONCERN YOU?

A: YES I AM WORRIED. YES, I AM WORRIED. WHEN WE STARTED THIS PEACE PROCESS, YOU MAY REMEMBER THAT WE STARTED THIS PEACE PROCESS IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE OCTOBER WAR. EGYPT AND THE UNITED STATES, ME AND KISSINGER, WE STARTED THIS PEACE PROCESS WHICH THE FIRST DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT, THE SECOND DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT, AND THEN THE THIRD STEP WAS THE GENEVA CONFERENCE THAT MR. CARTER STARTED TO MAKE THE PREPARATION FOR. WELL, HENRY AT THAT TIME HAD A THEORY. HE THOUGHT WHENEVER HE PROVIDES ISRAEL WITH MORE ARMS AND WHENEVER THEY FEEL MORE SECURE THROUGH BUILDING A HUGE ARSENAL THERE IN ISREAL THEY WILL BE MORE LENIENT AND MORE READY TO ACHIEVE THIS. I WAS OF THE OPPOSITE OPINION, I TOLD HIM IT WILL NOT. ON THE CONTRARY, IT WILL MAKE THEM AT CERTAIN POINTS DEFEY YOU. AND FOR THAT I AM AGAINST ANY ADDITIONAL ARMS TO ISRAEL. WHY? ISRAEL CANNOT ABSORB WHATEVER IS THERE NOW. BELIEVE ME, SOMETHING FANTASTIC, WHAT IS IN ISRAEL NOW. EITHER TYPE OR SOPHISTICATION. THE MOST SOPHISTICATED ARMS YOU HAVE PROVIDED TO ISRAEL. AND AS I TOLD YOU, TO THE EXTENT THAT THEY WILL NEED MERCENARIES TO COME FROM OUTSIDE TO USE THE ARMS BECAUSE THEY DON'T HAVE THE POPULATION TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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WORK THESE ARMS. SO ANY MORE ARMS WILL MEAN, AND BELIEVE ME IN THIS, BECAUSE AFTER SOME TIME YOU SHALL SEE THAT I AM RIGHT, THAT WHATEVER ARMS YOU GIVE WILL ALWAYS MAKE THEM IN A POSITION TO DEFEY YOU AND TO TRY AND IMPOSE THEIR CONDITIONS. FOR THAT I AM AGAINST ANY ADDITIONAL ARMAMENTS TO ISRAEL.

(...)

Q: COULD YOU MAKE THE PEACE WITH SAUDI ARABIA AND JORDAN? YOU SAY YOU'RE RELUCTANT TO MAKE A UNILATERAL PEACE WITH ISRAEL. WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE TO MAKE THE PEACE WITH THESE TWO PARTNERS?

A: WELL MARK THIS. THE TRIP OF THE VICE PRESIDENT TO SAUDI ARABIA IS MAINLY FOR THE ARMS DEAL. WE MUST " PREPARE OURSELVES TO FACE THE SITUATION WHEN YOU DENY US -YOUR CONGRESS DENIES US--THE VERY LEGITIMATE RIGHT TO DEFEND OUR COUNTRIES AND BE PROVIDED ARMS BY YOU FOR DEFENSE. THIS IS MAINLY IN SAUDI ARABIA. BUT IN JORDAN IT IS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT. WHY? BECAUSE WHEN I MADE MY PROPOSAL THAT YOU HAVE ALREADY TOLD ME ABOUT NOW, I DIDN'T KNOW WHEN IT WAS QUOTED IN THE NEW YORK TIMES THAT IT WAS NEW BECAUSE AS I TOLD YOU I TOLD WEIZMAN ABOUT IT BEFORE, BUT I DIDN'T MENTION IT (LAUGHTER).

BECAUSE THIS ISSUE, IF AGREED UPON WILL MEAN THAT JORDAN SHOULD BE READY TO COOPERATE IN THE WHOLE THING BECAUSE THEY WILL BE TAKING THE WEST BANK AGAIN. THE SITUATION WILL RETURN TO 1967. JERUSALEM WILL BE IN WESTERN BANK, EGYPT WILL BE IN GAZA STRIP, AND THEN WE SIT TOGETHER AND DISCUSS THE SECURITY ISSUE, AND SO ON. SO I THINK IT IS QUITE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LOGICAL THAT WE SHOULD TELL HIM WHAT WE MEAN BY THIS.

Q. IF THE ARMS DEAL DOES NOT GO THROUGH AND THE VICE PRESIDENT DOES GO TO SAUDI ARABIA WITH RESPECT TO THE ARMS SALE, DOES THIS MEAN YOU WILL HAVE TO GO SHOPPING FOR YOUR ARMS FROM THE FRENCH OR OTHER SUPPLIERS? IS THIS WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT?

A. FOR SURE. AS I TOLD YOU, I AM AFTER MY LEGITIMATE RIGHT TO DEFEND MY COUNTRY. I SHALL BE TRYING TO BUY FROM WESTERN EUROPE, FROM ENGLAND, ANY OTHER COUNTRY WHICH CAN HELP US. FOR SURE.

Q. I GET THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS IS A RATHER OMINOUS SITUATION. YOU ARE THREATENED BY THE ISRAELIS, YOU ARE THREATENED BY THE RUSSIANS, THERE IS A POSSIBILITY YOU WON'T GET THE ARMS YOU NEED TO DEFEND YOURSELF. ARE YOU PESSIMISTIC ABOUT PEACE?

A. NO. NOT AT ALL. AS I TOLD YOU, BY NATURE I AM ALWAYS OPTIMISTIC. I LEARNED IT HERE FROM THIS SOIL WHERE I WAS BROUGHT UP, HERE ON THIS SOIL. NO, I AM OPTIMISTIC.

2. FONMIN KAMEL HAS AUTHORIZED USE OF THE TEXT. EILTS UNQUOTE VANCE

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